(i)   a multimedia mail system for storing, as a multimedia mail message, AV signals generated at the workstation of a preparing participant, and for forwarding the multimedia mail message to a receiving participant; and

(ii)   a multimedia conference recorder for recording the AV signals representing the video images and spoken audio of the participants during the videoconference; and

(d)   means for synchronizing and recording both the video image and spoken audio of the participants during the videoconference and the data shared during the data conference.

3.   The teleconferencing system of claim 2 further comprising:

(a)   a data conference manager for managing a data conference during which data are shared among a plurality of the participants and displayed on the monitors of their respective workstations.

4.   The teleconferencing system according to claim 3 further comprising:

(a)   a message marker for defining a marked portion of a multimedia mail message and wherein the marked portion can be selectively displayed by the receiving participant when the multimedia mail message is reproduced.

5.   The teleconferencing system according to claim 4 further comprising a tag searcher for searching for a defined video tag and wherein the portion of the message can be selectively displayed.

6.   The teleconferencing system according to claim 5 wherein the tag searcher can search a plurality of multimedia mail messages to locate the defined tag.

7.   The teleconferencing system of claim 3 further comprising:

(a)   capture tools for capturing the data to be shared, and

(b)   annotation tools for annotating the shared data during a data conference;

and wherein the means for synchronizing and recording is operable to synchronize the playback of the annotated data conference recordings with the videoconference recordings.

8.   The teleconferencing system of claim 3 wherein the multimedia mail system includes the means for synchronizing and recording and a multimedia document storage and display mechanism for storing a multimedia document such that the multimedia document can be retrieved by a participant.

9.   The teleconferencing system of claim 8 wherein information can be transferred between the multimedia mail system, the means for synchronizing and recording and the multimedia document storage.

10.   The teleconferencing system of claim 3 wherein the synchronization means can store the relative timings associated with any displays at the workstation of a participant, so that the displays can be reproduced in synchronization when the receiving party accesses the message.

11.   The teleconferencing system of claim 11, further comprising means, operable by the receiving participant, to selectively halt and continue the accessed message.

12.   A method of synchronizing the display of images in a teleconferencing system for conducting a teleconference among a plurality of participants and having workstations with associated monitors for displaying visual images, and with associated AV capture and reproduction capabilities for capturing and reproducing video images and spoken audio of the participants, the workstations being interconnected by a first network, the network providing a data path for carrying digital data signals among the workstations, the method comprising the steps of:

(a)   associating an AV timer with the reproduction of the video images and the spoken audio;

(b)   associating a data display timer with the display of images related to the data signals; and

(c)   synchronizing the AV and data display timers such that

when video images and spoken audio are reproduced, the AV timer controls the timing of such reproduction,

when video images and spoken audio are reproduced together with the display of images related to the data signals, the AV timer controls the timing of such reproduction and display, and

when only images related to the data signals are displayed the data display timer controls the timing of such display.

13.   A method of conducting a teleconference among a plurality of participants having workstations with associated monitors for displaying visual images, and with associated AV capture and reproduction capabilities for capturing and reproducing video images and spoken audio of the participants, the workstations being interconnected by a first network, the network providing a data path for carrying digital data signals among the workstations, the method comprising the steps of:

(a)   carrying AV signals representing video images and spoken audio of the participants among the workstations along an AV path;

(b)   managing a videoconference during which the video image and spoken audio of one of the participants can be reproduced at the workstation of another of the participants;

(c)   at least one of the group of steps consisting of

(i)   storing, as a multimedia mail message, AV signals generated at the workstation of a preparing participant, and for forwarding the multimedia mail message to a receiving participant; and

(ii)   recording the AV signals representing the video images and spoken audio of the participants during the videoconference; and

(d)   synchronizing and recording both the video image and spoken audio of the participants during the videoconference and the data shared during the data conference.

14.   The method of claim 13, further comprising the steps of:

(a)   managing a data conference during which data are shared among a plurality of the

participants and displayed on the monitors of their respective workstations.

15.   The method according to claim 13 further comprising the steps of:

(a)   defining a marked portion of a multimedia mail message; and

(b)   selectively displaying the marked portion the multimedia mail message is reproduced.

16.   The method of claim 15 further comprising the steps of:

(a)   searching for a defined video tag; and

(b)   selectively displaying a portion of the message associated with the video tag.

17.   The method of claim 16 wherein the tag searcher can search a plurality of multimedia

mail messages to locate the defined tag.

18.   The method of claim 17 further comprising the steps of:

(a)   capturing the data to be shared;

(b)   annotating the shared data during a data conference; and

(c)   synchronizing the playback of the annotated data conference recordings with the

videoconference recordings.

19.   The method of claim 17 further comprising the steps of:

(a)   storing the relative timings associated with any displays at the workstation of a

participant; and

(b)   synchronizing the reproduction of the displays when the receiving party accesses the

message.

20.   The method of claim 19 further comprising the steps of selectively halting and continuing

the accessed message.

REMARKS

This application is a 35 U.S.C § 121 divisional application of parent United States patent

application 08/131,523, filed October 1, 1993. The claims in this application correspond in part

to an amended version of the single claim in Group IX and to a subset of amended claims from

Group VIII as defined in a Restriction/Election requirement in the parent application.